

REMARKS

Claims 8-12 constitute all currently pending claims in the application.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 8-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,594,640 to Postrel (“Postrel”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,119,229 to Martinez et al. (“Martinez”), U.S. Patent No. 4,268,715 to Atalla (“Atalla”), U.S. Patent App. Pub. No. 2001/0032252 to Durst Jr. et al. (“Durst”), and U.S. Patent App. Pub. No. 2001/0037315 to Saliba et al. (“Saliba”). This rejection is traversed for at least the following reasons.

Claim 8 recites the following:

secret identification information updating means for updating secret identification information stored in the first database in association with the point information when the point information stored in the first database is updated by the point information updating means

The Examiner concedes that Atalla and Postrel “are silent on secret identification information being updated when point information is updated.” (Office Action at 6.) However, the Examiner contends that Saliba teaches this feature of claim 8, citing paragraph [0092] of that reference. With respect to Saliba, the Examiner merely asserts that Saliba provides “a user the ability to update account information, personal information, credit information, etc.”

Saliba, and paragraph [0092] of Saliba in particular, appear to teach a system in which a user is able to edit account information through a graphical user interface. The user apparently has complete discretion and choice as to when such information is updated, and whether or not it is updated at all.

In contrast, claim 8 recites a system in which the secret identification information updating means updates secret identification information “when the point information stored in the first database is updated.” As described in Applicant’s Response of April 15, 2009, because the secret identification information is specifically updated when the point information is updated, points may not be transferred, and point information cannot be updated again, until a further point inquiry request is made. This is because claim 8 also requires that “the secret identification information included in the point transfer request . . . matches the secret identification information stored in the first database.”

The interaction of these two features provides the result that point information cannot be transferred or updated again until another point inquiry request is made. If, as in Saliba, a system merely provides the capability for a user to update information whenever desired, the system would not achieve the result achieved by claim 8, and described above. In order to achieve this result, the secret identification information must always be updated automatically when the point information is updated. Saliba fails to teach this feature of claim 8, and none of the other cited references appear to teach or suggest this feature.

Thus, Postrel, Martinez, Atalla, Durst, and Saliba, alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest each and every required element of claim 8. These references, therefore, fail to render claim 8 unpatentable. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claim 8 and its dependent claim 9.

Claims 10, 11, and 12, recite features similar to those of independent claim 8. These claims are, therefore, also patentable at least for reasons analogous to those presented above with respect to claim 8. Accordingly, Applicant also respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 10, 11, and 12.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,


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